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TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: JORDAN'S PM OPEN TO IDEAS ON IRAQI REFUGEES

REF: AMMAN 460

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft for reasons 1.4 b and d

¶1. (C) In a series of meetings over the past three months, Ambassador has raised with Jordan's PM Nader Al-Dahabi and Chief of the Royal Court Nasser Al-Lozi the need to improve the situation of Iraqi refugees in Jordan, pushing them to grant temporary protective status, open up avenues for legal employment, and expand vocational training. Both have expressed their willingness to consider improvements in all three areas.

¶2. (C) The PM has stated, however, that because of Jordan's increasingly difficult economic environment, he will need to find "practical ways" to make progress. Dahabi invited input on temporary protective status, elaborating that he would prefer a mechanism through which status was granted for a term renewable upon review by the Cabinet. He worried, however, that Parliament might for political reasons be unreliable in renewing the status of refugees, particularly given economic pressures on Jordan.

¶3. (C) When asked by Ambassador, the PM also expressed his willingness to waive overstay fines for Iraqi refugees seeking to return home, as the current 1.5 JD (just over USD 2) per family member per day is a strong disincentive. As far as Post knows, however, no steps have yet been taken to waive the fees, with the only recent changes toward Iraqis being an easing of residency and other logistical requirements meant to encourage more Iraqi investors to come to Jordan (Reftel).

¶4. (C) Comment: Post is following up on these conversations by providing the PM with papers exploring possible options for granting temporary protective status and legalizing employment for Iraqi refugees. Post is also engaging with NGOs and government officials to explore ways to expand vocational training. We will also continue to follow up on the PM's promise to waive overstay fees.
Beecroft